Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Roosevelt’s Reaction to the Great Depression

Primary Source Worksheet

*Directions: Read the short excerpts and then answer the questions underneath. You may work with a partner on this activity. Make sure that your writ e your answers down on the sheet.*



“Long before Inauguration Day I became convinced that individual effort and local effort and even disjointed Federal effort had failed and of necessity would fail and, therefore, that a rounded leadership by the Federal Government had become a necessity both of theory and of fact. Such leadership, however, had its beginning in preserving and strengthening the credit of the United States Government, because without that no leadership was a possibility. For years the Government had not lived within its income. The immediate task was to bring our regular expenses within our **revenues (money that the government earns from taxes)**. That has been done.” (FDR, July 24th, 1933).

1. What is Roosevelt’s message in this speech?

1. Whose policies is he talking about when he says “individual effort and local effort and even disjointed Federal effort had failed”?
2. Why would you want to bring our “regular expenses within our revenues”?

“In this same classification we can properly place the great public works program running to a total of over Three Billion Dollars -- to be used for highways and ships and flood prevention and inland navigation and thousands of self-sustaining state and municipal improvements. Two points should be made clear in the allotting and administration of these projects -- first, we are using the utmost care to choose labor creating quick-acting, useful projects, avoiding the smell of the **pork barrel** (**excess money spent on unnecessary projects**); and secondly, we are hoping that at least half of the money will come back to the government from projects which will pay for themselves over a period of years.” (FDR, July 24th, 1933)

1. Look back at your notes. What type of public works projects is he talking about?
2. *Why does FDR want to create public works projects?*
3. *How are they beneficial to the country?*

On the basis of this simple principle of everybody doing things together, we are starting out on this nationwide attack on unemployment. It will succeed if our people understand it -- in the big industries, in the little shops, in the great cities and in the small villages. There is nothing complicated about it and there is nothing particularly new in the principle. It goes back to the basic idea of society and of the nation itself that people acting in a group can accomplish things which no individual acting alone could even hope to bring about. If all employers will act together to shorten hours and raise wages we can put people back to work. No employer will suffer, because the relative level of competitive cost will advance by the same amount for all. But if any considerable group should lag or shirk, this great opportunity will pass us by and we will go into another desperate Winter. This must not happen**.** .” (FDR, July 24th, 1933)

1. Why is unemployment such an important problem to address?
2. Why do all employer’s need to work together to end unemployment?
3. What is the benefit for employers?